131 from north to south is almost 1,000 kilometers long, and Kamchatka Peninsula stretches around 1,600 kilometers into the sea from the mainland. These few facts may be enough to give some notion of the vast distances and also the size of the land. The land covers 3,850,000 square kilometers. That is more than fifteen times the size of Great Britain and Northern Ireland or seventeen times the area of France. But this vast area is in European terms practically empty of 161 people; for in one square kilometer taken as the general mean, there 311 are only 1.6 persons--even if estimated population of 6.3 million in 1950 is taken as a basis. That is extraordinarily sparsely settled. However, in order not to give any false notions, it must at the same time be noted that the actual distribution of people is entirely different. In the southern parts there are regions which are much more thickly settled, while in the vast areas away from the transportation lines, especially throughout the north, in areas of many square kilometers only one person is to be found.

The southern regions--Transbaykal, Amur Oblast, Maritime Krai, the greater part of Kamchatka, and also Sakhalin--are completely suitable for accepting people, even though the harsh climate brings certain hardships. But the Russians are more accustomed to bearing such conditions and better suited for overcoming them than any other European people. Thus Transbaykal and the real Far Eastern regions of the Soviet Union offer settlement opportunities with good prospects for the excess population in other /16/ sections. The population has continuously and considerably increased through immigration:

1911	1,723,754
1926	2,304,000
1939	4,039,000
1950	6,300,000

• 631 The administrative division corresponds approximately with 161 the natural provinces named in the concept "Soviet Far East" although the borders do not coincide exactly. However, in order to be able to use figures and statistics, it is necessary for practical reasons to make the administrative regions equivalent to the provinces. Unfortunately exact data for this purpose are available only for the time of the last census on January 17, 1929. These data give the following figures for the Soviet Far East: /Table on Following page/

3 [i.e. The Soviet Far East — Analyst]

631 ●
161

Administrative Unit	Size	Population
1. Buryat Mongol Autonomous Socialist Soviet Republic	331,400	542,200
2. Chita Oblast	720,000	1,159,500
Transbaykal	1,051,400	1,701,700
3. Khabarovsk Krai	2,572,000	1,430,900
4. Maritime Krai	206,600	907,200
Far Eastern Region	2,778,600	2,338,100
Total for the "Soviet Far East"	3,830,000	4,039,800

161

Under the above basic division, the following comparisons can be made. Transbaykal comprises approximately one-twentieth of the total area of the Soviet Union (1939: 21,175,208 square kilometers), but it has only a hundredth of the population. In the Far Eastern region the contrasts are still greater; for in area it has an eighth of the total, but it has only an eightieth of the population in the entire country. Therefore, even in comparison with the Soviet Union there is an extraordinary disproportion between area and population, which indicates that here are special relationships with both geographical and historical bases. These will be discussed in detail later.

631

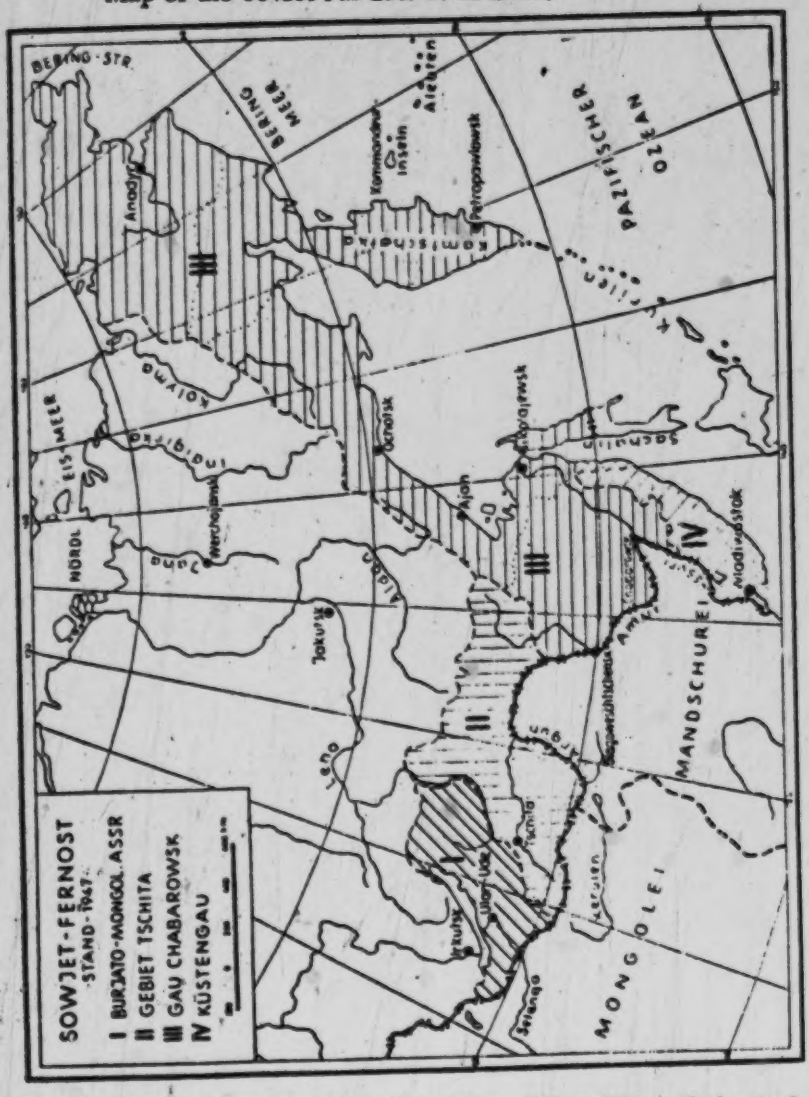
The recent past has brought a change in the administrative division. Two new administrative regions (oblast) were formed, namely Amur Oblast (1948) and Sakhalin Oblast (1947). To the first was attached a part of the old Chita Oblast and a part of Khabarovsk District (Krai). Its size is 360,100 square kilometers. Blagoveshchensk was selected as the capital of the oblast. To Sakhalin /17/ /Map of the Soviet Far East as of 1947:/ /18/ Oblast belongs the entire island (64,750 square kilometers) and the Kurils (15,600 square kilometers); the capital is Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk.

The border separating these from the other parts of the Soviet Union has, however, remained the same. Accordingly, the following administrative units belong to the Soviet Far East at present:

1. Buryat-Mongol ASSR
2. Chita Oblast

631.

Map of the Soviet Far East as of 1947:



I = Buryat-Mongol ASSR; II = Chita Oblast; III = Khabarovsk Krai; IV = Maritime Krai

631

3. Khabarovsk Krai
5. Maritime Krai
6. Sakhalin Oblast

The two sketch maps inserted in the book show the old and the new administrative division. In the following presentation the old administrative units must be used as a rule in statistical information.

The new division of the administrative regions which has been made often during the period of Soviet rule, shows that the Soviet Far East is still not in its final from, neither as to population nor as to the development of its economy nor yet as to its administrative order; everything is in vital flux, everything is coming into being and becoming.

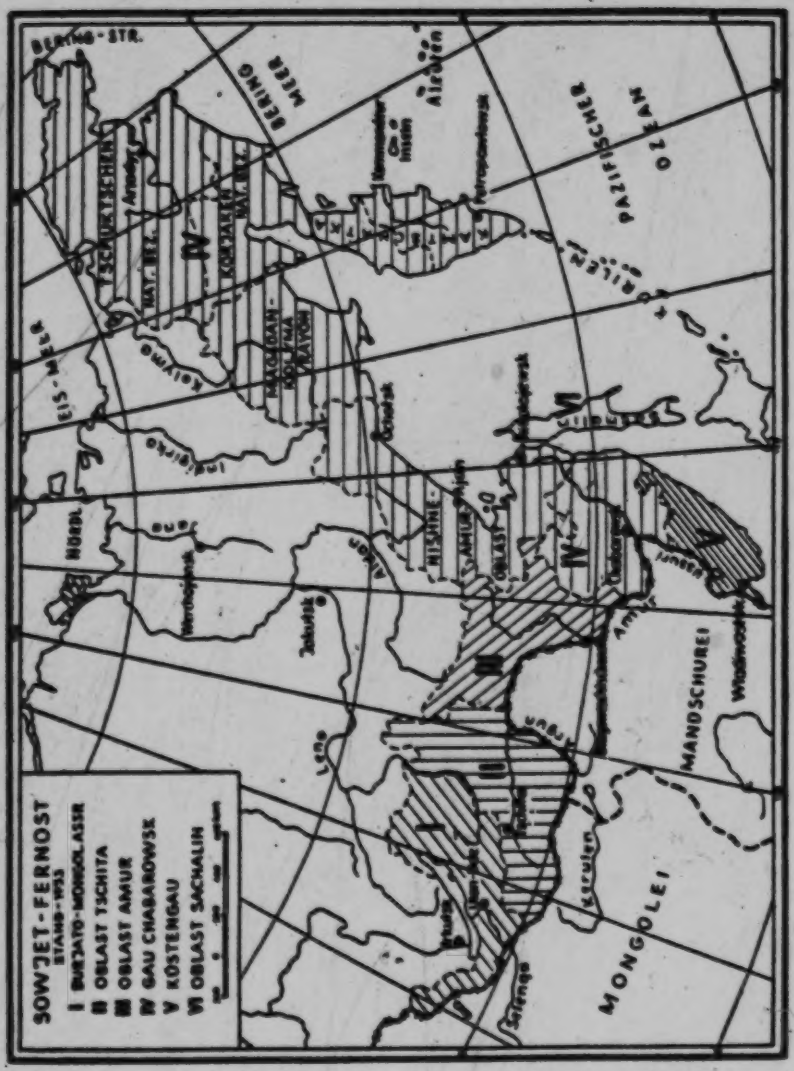
Unveiling and Occupation

175
484

The conquest of Siberia, begun in 1581 by Yermak and his Cossacks, moved forward to the east very quickly, unhampered by the sparse population. It followed the great rivers, whose watery courses served the Cossacks both as a route and as a sign-post into the vast areas never before tresspassed upon by a European. River area after river area was thus transversed by them and secured by bases remaining there. Already by 1632 the city of Yakutsk was founded in the land of the Yakut on the middle Lena, and from then on this city served as a starting point for further pressure forward. In 1638 a Cossack division of Ataman Koplov proceeded along the Aldan and its tributary the Maya. They wanted to go to the "Great Sea," which the Tungus reported to them and which the Tungus called the "lamu," the "sea." However, they went only around 100 kilometers along the Maya and then had to stop for the winter. A smaller group under the leadership of the Cossack Moskvitin advanced farther along the way. They carried their boats from the upper Maya over the watershed of the Dzhugdzhur and reached the Ul'ya, which carried them on. In 1649 these Cossacks reached the coast of the Sea of Okhotsk, being the first Europeans to do so. At the mouth of the Ul'ya, somewhat south of present day Okhotsk, Mosvitin established a base and explored the coast to the north and south and /19/ /Map of the Soviet Far East as of 1953:/ /20/ went as far as the mouth of the Uda. However, he did not find the Shantar Islands. They were discovered only in 1710. Another Cossack by the name of Shelkovnikov founded

Map of the Soviet Far East as of 1953:

631



I - Buryat-Mongol ASSR; II - Chita Oblast; III - Amur Oblast; IV - Khabarovsk Krai; V - Maritime Krai; VI - Sakhalin Oblast

115 a survey of the development and buildup of the Magadan-Kolyma area with
121 the intention of serving as an introduction to subsequent reports on current activities in the Kolyma region.

[13] 2) Physical Features of Kolyma: Kolyma is that region in the
63 northeastern part of Siberia, named for the Kolyma River; the boundaries have never been made public, but it is generally considered correct to state that the entire administrative entity is bordered on the north by the Arctic Ocean, on the east by the Sea of Okhotsk, and on the south and west by the impenetrable forests of the taiga. In the early 1930's the territory consisted only of the districts of the gold fields on the upper Kolyma and the highway which was being constructed to connect the gold fields with the coast of the Sea of Okhotsk (Magadan-Srednikan-Seimchan Highway). With the passage of time other areas were added to the territory; some claim that at present the entire region encompasses not only the Kolyma area and that part bordering on the Sea of Okhotsk but also the regions along the Yana and Indigirka Rivers in addition to the whole of the Chukotsk region and Kamchatka.

Another estimate of the geographical boundaries of the territory claims that the entire Soviet Far East is under the jurisdiction of Khabarovsk Krai (a "krai" is a political subdivision), which in turn contains the following component parts: The Jewish Autonomous Oblast, Lower Amur Oblast, and Kamchatka Oblast (This last Oblast is claimed to comprise Chukchi and Koryak national okrugs; in addition, there are supposedly two distinct areas of oblast size within the Krai: One centered at Khabarovsk and the other at Magadan in the Kolyma territory, in which the constituent rayons come under the direct jurisdiction of the Khabarovsk Krai administration.

625 Be that as it may, there is ample evidence to support the contention
631 that neither of the two above cited political divisions are tech-
471 nically correct; due to the establishment of Dalstroy (Far Eastern Construction Administration) in 1931-1932, it may be stated with considerable justification that the jurisdiction of Dalstroy extends over all northeast Siberia at the present time, taking in all the land east of the Lena River and north of the River Aldan. If this is the case, the total area is approximately six times that of metropolitan France or some 1,400,000 square miles.

In other words, it is quite clear that the exact geographical boundaries of the region are not known, but it may be at least assumed that Dalstroy, which is an organ of the MVD, has complete control of at least the Kolyma region and most likely the northern areas of Chukchi and Koryak. That the MVD under the name of Dalstroy is in control of large tracts of territory is a proven fact, but the territorial limitations of this organization are not clear.

642 3) Administration: The Constitution of the USSR is not formally
625 operative throughout this vast area (equal to approximately 40% of the United States proper), and the usual authority of regional Soviet agencies does not apply. There are no local Soviets in the territory, nor do elections occur with the exception of those for the Supreme Soviet. However, even in this instance, it is worthy of note that the Kolyma representative in the Soviet of Nationalities is Lieutenant General Nishikov of the MVD, chief of Dalstroy. The widespread area and activities under the Dalstroy administration have resulted in an organization where the economic life of the region is combined with legislative, judicial, administrative, and police functions. In the general structure of governmental authority in the USSR, Dalstroy occupies a unique position; it is beyond all doubt an organ of the MVD, and its official name is "Dalstroy MVD." In the organization of the MVD, Dalstroy comes under the authority of one of the Deputy Ministers.

1/ [i.e., the Kolyma region of Siberia — Analyst]